**Chapter 1**

**OVERVIEW OF THE PROGRAM AND PLAN**

**INTRODUCTION**

This chapter contains information about the PHA and its programs with emphasis on the public housing program. It also contains information about the purpose, intent and use of the Admission and Continued Occupancy Policy (ACOP) and guide.

Part I: The Public Housing Agency (PHA). This part includes a description of the PHA, its jurisdiction, its programs, and its mission and intent.

Part II: The Public Housing Program. This part contains information about the public housing program operation, roles and responsibilities, and partnerships.

Part III: The Admissions and Continued Occupancy Policy (ACOP). This part discusses the purpose and organization of the ACOP and its revision schedule. The instructions also contain guidance for each chapter and how to use the document within your agency.

**PART I: THE PHA**

**1-I.A. OVERVIEW**

This section is an overview. **No policy decisions are required.**

**1-I.B. ORGANIZATION AND STRUCTURE OF THE PHA**

This section describes the general structure of the organization and the relationship between the board and the staff. **No policy decisions are required.**

**CAUTION:** **In this section you must insert the name of your PHA and the name of the jurisdiction(s) covered by your PHA.**

**1-I.C. PHA MISSION STATEMENT**

The PHA should have established a written mission to guide the agency in its operation.

🗹 **Decision Point: What is the PHA’s mission statement? (Model ACOP, p. 1-3)**

Things to Consider

* Mission statements are meant to communicate the purpose of the agency to people inside and outside the agency.
* The mission statement is a required component of the Five-Year and Annual PHA Plan.
* The purpose or mission is the core of an organization. It provides guiding direction for developing strategy, defining critical success factors, searching out key opportunities, making resource allocation choices, satisfying clients and stakeholders, and making decisions.
* As public housing programs transition to asset management and project-based management, the PHA may decide to re-visit its mission statement to reflect a more entrepreneurial approach to public housing.
* A mission statement should be clear and understandable and brief. It should be updated to reflect the agency’s current direction.
* A mission statement is adopted by the board of commissioners.
* To be fully understood and adopted by all, the management staff of the agency must set the example set forth in the mission statement.
* Mission statements should be posted and available for all employees.
* Options 2 and 3 contain sample mission statement language should the PHA require assistance in writing one. However, keep in mind that should the PHA adopt the language in Options 2 or 3, the same language must be used in the PHA’s Five-Year and Annual PHA Plan.

**CAUTION:** **You must insert information here. The model ACOP does not contain language that can be adopted as-is.**

🞎 *Option 1: Insert the mission statement per the most recently approved Five-Year and Annual PHA Plan.*

**[Insert the PHA’s mission statement from the Five-Year and Annual Plan]**

* *Option 2: Delete model plan language and substitute the language as shown below.*

The PHA’s mission is to provide safe, habitable dwelling units for very low-income families and to manage resources efficiently. The PHA is to promote personal, economic and social upward mobility to provide families the opportunity to make the transition from subsidized to non-subsidized housing.

🞎 *Option 3: Delete model ACOP language and substitute any of the mission statements or any combination of the mission statements as shown below.*

To serve our community's housing needs using all resources available.

To provide affordable housing for all residents through creative partnerships with public and private collaborators.

To provide quality housing opportunities to improve the lives of the citizens who are in need.

To provide housing for low-income families by entering into partnerships to increase housing stock.

To strive to be a viable business for the public good.

To provide quality housing opportunities to improve the lives of those in need.

To provide safe, habitable, affordable housing for eligible residents of the City (or County) of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

To provide affordable housing that is in good repair, to be stewards of public funds and trust, and to serve all customers with respect.

To do good by doing good business in offering a variety of housing opportunities for the community's citizens.

To provide affordable housing and quality customer service to families we serve.

To promote innovative housing communities and encourage clients to achieve self-sufficiency.

To help families and individuals with low incomes achieve greater stability and self reliance by providing safe, affordable quality housing and links to community services.

🞎 *Option 4: Use PHA-established policy. Edit the model ACOP language or delete it and insert the PHA’s policy.*

**1-I.D. THE PHA’S COMMITMENT TO ETHICS AND SERVICE**

This section of the ACOP is included to guide the PHA in making decisions and determining whether they are meeting the commitment of the agency to the public and to the families served. **No policy decisions are required unless the PHA wishes to add to or delete the standards listed.**

**PART II: THE PUBLIC HOUSING PROGRAM**

**1-II.A. OVERVIEW AND HISTORY OF THE PROGRAM**

The intent of this section is to provide the public and staff with an overview of the history and operation of public housing. **No policy decisions are required.**

**1-II.B. PUBLIC HOUSING PROGRAM BASICS**

This section provides information on the basics of program operation. It is intended to assist the audience in understanding the program. **No policy decisions are required.**

**1-II.C. THE PUBLIC HOUSING PARTNERSHIPS**

This section provides an overview of the roles and responsibilities of the various parties involved in the operation of the public housing program. If all parties understand their roles and responsibilities, the program operates more efficiently and effectively. The section is intended to assist the audience in understanding the program. **No policy decisions are required.**

**1-II.D. APPLICABLE REGULATIONS**

This section provides a list of regulations applicable to the public housing program. **No policy decisions are required.**

**PART III: THE ADMISSIONS AND CONTINUED OCCUPANCY POLICY**

**1-III.A. OVERVIEW AND PURPOSE OF THE POLICY**

This section explains the need for and purpose of the policy. **No policy decisions are required.**

**1-III.B. CONTENTS OF THE POLICY (24CFR 982.54)**

This section lists the regulatory requirements of the policy and the additional reasons for the policy language and topics covered. **No policy decisions are required.**

**1-III.C. UPDATING AND REVISING THE POLICY**

The PHA should have a strategy in place for updating the policy.

🗹 **Decision Point: How often should the policy document be updated? (Model ACOP, p. 1-12)**

Things to Consider

* As regulations are published and effective, there will be decisions required of the PHA. Generally, when the regulation contains the word “may” (not “may not” which is mandatory), a decision is required. Decisions should be made in writing and incorporated into the policy to ensure consistent program operation by staff.
* There are various strategies to employ for updating the policy. It can be updated when a new regulation requires implementation. It can be updated at any other time, including quarterly, especially when the PHA sees the need for local decisions to ensure staff consistency in operation.
* By subscribing to the NMA revision service, you will receive an email when policy and guide revisions are available for you to incorporate in the PHA’s ACOP. These will be made available at least once a year. These can be incorporated when received or on a pre-determined schedule.
* There is no required time period for updating the ACOP.
* The PHA should review and update the policy as needed to reflect changes in regulations or PHA operations.

🞎 *Option 1: Use the model ACOP language shown below. No changes to the model ACOP are required.*

The PHA will review and update the ACOP as needed to reflect changes in regulations, PHA operations, or when needed to ensure staff consistency in operation.

🞎 *Option 2: Use PHA-established policy. Edit the model ACOP language or delete it and insert the PHA’s policy.*

**FINALIZING THE DOCUMENT**

Take a final look at the changes you have made in this chapter of the ACOP.  
Have you:

(1) Added or subtracted any exhibits at the end of the chapter?  Yes  No.

(2) Added, subtracted or reordered any major sections (at the A, B, or C level?)  Yes  No

If you answered yes to either of these questions, you must adjust the chapter to match your changes.

**☑ Decision Point: Are any changes required to this chapter?**

No. No changes to the model policy are needed.

Yes. Edits only. Edit and insert PHA language as appropriate.

Yes. PHA changed the organization of the chapter. Adjust the chapter to reflect your changes **and** review the rest of the document to make sure that any references to section numbers are correct.

**☑ Decision Point: Are changes required in other chapters as a result of changes to this chapter?**

Check the “Things to Consider” under each decision point to identify if changes to the model policy will require changes to policies in other chapters of the ACOP.

No. Changes to other chapters are not necessary.

Yes. Changes to the following chapters are also required.